

## National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? Left-wing radicals getting a free pass

Some things should be pretty easy.

Take the question of violent demonstrations. Surely whether you're left, right or smack in the middle, you can oppose violent demonstrators.

There now, we all agree. Or do we?

In principle, yes. In practice, absolutely not.

For years, there has been much ado about violent protesters if they are right-wing, e.g. white supremacists. Fair enough. Yet, when it comes to left-wing thuggery, particularly the ?antifa? and Black Bloc, well, it's okay that they show up to support ?democracy? and ?human rights? wearing face masks and wielding clubs. After all, their hearts are in the right place.

Donald Trump, for example, instead of just condemning the white supremacists who despoiled the streets of Charlottesville ? which he clearly did ? also condemned the ?antifa? thugs who were every bit a part of the riot.

Yet for daring to condemn both sides in this sordid event, Trump was widely labeled a Nazi, a modern day Hitler, among other things.

Closer to home, the federal Liberals have announced plans to clamp down on ?right-wing violence.? What about left-wing violence? Tsk. Tsk. Even asking clearly means you're a Nazi. Or worse.

A recent Toronto Star headline illustrates the point. Reporting on violence at a demonstration at McGill University in Montreal, the Star blared: ?Violence at right wing protest.? It was true, sort of. The problem was that the violence was committed by left-wing radicals, not the right, many of whom show up to these events, as accurately described by National Post columnist Rex Murphy, ?clad in black from head to storm trooper toe, with their full arsenal of smoke bombs, brass knuckles, pipes, sticks and baseball bats, pepper spray and even shields (to pummel, not protect).?

They've been doing this for years. Witness every G-7 summit meeting you can think of, pretty well anywhere in the world, and these fascistic-anti-fascists are there, armed to the teeth, ready and willing to strike a blow for democracy. Or so they claim.

For the most part, they continue to get away with it, given a free pass by the media and politicians, who are so enamored of condemning right-wing lunatics ? who, by the way, are not on the verge of taking over the U.S., no matter what the newspapers claim ? that they ignore the increasingly violent lefties.

After the Charlottesville disgrace, a piece by Star columnist Emma Teitel was headlined: ?Time to shame white supremacists.? No quarrel with that. But what about the antifa and Black Bloc and their fellow travelers?

Why is right-wing violence evil, but left-wing violence is not only tolerated, but rarely even acknowledged?

Actress Jennifer Lawrence, writes Teitel, tweeted a photo of some white supremacist marchers saying, ?These are the faces of hate. Look closely and post anyone you find. You can't hide with the internet you pathetic cowards.?

Good idea. Problem is, it's difficult to post the ?faces? of the intifa and black block because they tend to wear masks to hide their identity. But a mention by Lawrence of the left-wing haters would add credibility to her outrage.

But if she did that ? as Trump discovered ? she'd be deluged by social media and the mainstream media for daring to actually speak truth to power ? as the left likes to say ? and acknowledge that the problem of violent demonstrators is, if anything, more widespread on the left than it is on the right.

Look at the demonstration (again) at Berkeley, where the left-wing thugs showed up to protest a conservative group and managed to smash cameras and beat up reporters and, as Murphy again reports, ?in one case threatened a man in a wheelchair, and in general stormed the streets like a wolf pack after a long hunger and a really bad hair day. Anti-fascism is hard thuggish work.?

Yes, it is. But it seems to get rewarded with a free pass from the media and usually succeeds in blocking the free speech rights of anyone whom they have deemed unworthy of speaking.

All this, of course, in the name of free speech, civility and democracy.

Even new Tory Leader Andrew Scheer, sadly, has fallen victim to the tyranny of the violent minority and their enablers. Rather than defend the right of the Canadian Nationalist Party ? which likely has at most a dozen members ? to speak at the University of Toronto, which barred them after activists objected, Scheer said, ?I respect the right for universities to determine which outside groups they give a platform to.?

How about respecting the rights of any group, left or right, to say their piece, as long as they're not advocating criminality?

That would be brave. And something you'd hope a Conservative would favor. But Scheer, like the rest of them, doesn't have the guts.

